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ABSTRACT

The teaching of English in the United Kingdom has undergone change during the last decade and is presently in a state of flux. Current language concerns, mainly involving students 11-18 years old, may be viewed in three ways. Students' use of language should be encouraged in the classroom through expressive talk but with teacher guidance and example, through improvised drama, and through creative writing. Language should be studied consciously in forms other than literature, as in mass media and in everyday use--the language of gossip, interviews, children, politicians, different kinds of workers, and town signs. Teachers in the United Kingdom are finding several models of language useful, particularly those of modern linguists, the transactional model, and the restricted and elaborated code theory. (JM)

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Some current language concerns in the teaching of English in the U.K.

by

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Introduction

In this article I want to discuss some of the current language concerns in the teaching of English in the U.K. The article will focus mainly on the 11-18 year age range, but some aspects of it will be applicable to the 9-11 age range. I propose to look at these language concerns in three ways: firstly, the pupils own uses of language; secondly, the conscious study of language; and thirdly, some of the theories and models of language now underpinning and informing the teaching.

During the past decade or so, the teaching of English in the U.K. has undergone change. One has only to compare current text books with those of the early fifties to realise that something different is going on. This is not to say that the new trends are to be found in all schools, or that they are properly understood by all teachers. Nor is it to say that they are all well founded and properly thought through. The teaching of English is in a state of flux in the U.K. as it is in the U.S. Change comes about slowly in education, and we can find teachers in the same school with very different philosophies about their subjects. Given then that the situation is fluid, I want to discuss those language concerns which I feel to be important, and which, in my opinion, are contributing to a more enlightened and imaginative teaching of the subject.

The Pupils Own Uses of Language

The past decade or so has seen several interesting and significant changes in attitudes about the modes of language, and the styles of language within those modes, that pupils are asked to use in the classroom. Possibly the most significant change in attitude relates to talk.

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Talk in the classroom

"Children should be seen and not heard" is a Victorian saying which has died hard in the U.K. classroom. Teachers have traditionally seen themselves as imparters of wisdom and knowledge, and their pupils as receivers. As a consequence, teachers have traditionally done most of the talking and their pupils most of the listening in the classroom, when they haven't switched off. The recent work of Flanders and his associates (1), crude though it is in some respects, confirms what most of us have suspected, that teachers do most of the talking and pupils most of the listening.

Yet outside the classroom a pupil's behaviour is very different. Most of his interaction with others, and consequent making sense of the world, is done by means of talk. Rarely does he write to another person, and if he reads even avidly, he'll not read as much as he talks. This self-evident truth has at last begun to influence the teaching of English. At the same time it has been accompanied by the realisation that the passive role formerly expected by teachers of their pupils is hardly likely to bring about real internalisation of information and values (accommodation in the Piagetian sense), but is more likely to result in regurgitation of what the teacher expects. The wrestle with experience is something as active as it is passive, and teachers of English are beginning to acknowledge the importance of talk as one active means to learning.

However, merely to acknowledge that talk should take place is not enough. The kinds of talk allowed in the classroom, and the quality of it are also crucially important. The recent work of Douglas Barnes (2) has shown clearly that talk need not necessarily bring about learning, especially when it is completely teacher initiated and dominated, and when there is little appreciation of the frames of reference that pupils are operating with. Teachers of English are consequently trying to introduce different kinds of talk, from the teacher dominated kind, into their classrooms. One important kind of talk is what James Britton (3) has called expressive talk. (I shall return later to his theories.)

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This is talk which he argues is close to that frequently used by pupils outside of the classroom in their everyday talk with friends and acquaintances. Some of the important characteristics of this talk is that it is exploratory, relaxed, infofmal and relatively unstructured. "It is in expressive speech that we are likely to rehearse the growing points of our formulation and analysis of experience ..... It is our principal means of exchanging opinions, attitudes, beliefs in face to face situations." (4) However, talk of this kind, with the characteristics of friendly conversation, is difficult to achieve in large, public class discussion; and so teachers of English in the U.K. are realising that small group work is more likely to facilitate relaxed, tentative, exploratory talk.

The following extract,(5) taken from the conversation of a group of five sixteen-year-old girls talking about homes, will perhaps illustrate some of the characteristics of mutually supportive, expressive talk. The girls are discussing relationships within a family, and girl A begins by recalling her own personal relationship with her parents when she was very young, and how these were disrupted, in her opinion, after the birth of her younger brother.

A. When we used to live in .. in Kennington ... they used to walk ... we used to walk across the bridge ... you know, walk round London... used to be ever so happy and I can remember my parents walking along hand in hand ... you know .... giggling (Laughter) ... and there's me in between, you know, looking up... and laughing our heads off we were...and I can remember that clearly as anything. It's one of the first things I remembered...you know, being very happy, just the three of us. Then the next thing I remember was me having to go away because my brother was born and he had pneumonia...and he came along and it was horrible...(Yes) (Laughter)... t split up the family ... you know what I mean... I was really jealous.

E. You were out of things...

A. Yeah, I got really left out...and it's been a bit like that ever since. (I think that, like...Well, not only that...)

B. I think parents begin to get out of touch with each other as husband and wife... slightly, I should think... I don't know... it all depends what the couple's life... er....when they start having children. You see it takes so much of their time... and it takes a certain place in their lives.

A. The husband gets left out a lot, doesn't he? (Yeah...has a hard....) (Laughter)... No, you hear such a lot...when perhaps....when your dad come home in the evening and your mother will say, Just a minute I'm getting so and so's tea.... Can you wait a bit?....you know, he's probably come home from work...(Yeah)

B. Or, I've got my ironing.... or, I've got to take the children to bed...and what not.

A. Yeah, I think that's when they get...

D. My dad comes home and he sits down and says, Will somebody get my slippers?

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and nobody moves, you know...Everyone's eating their dinner or staring at the television...He feels very neglected I think...

B. Probably because he feels everything should be done to him you know. (Yeah)

C. He's the father...they should do everything for him....

D. Probably been...

B. Head of the house...as it were

A. ...extra special attention...which I think is right, you know...I hope I remember that whenever I get married.

D. He's the one that goes out to work...earns the money, as he says.

B. But then again, you find some families who...don't take this attitude. They feel that...both should be the sort of...head...you know...leader.

It is worth pausing for a moment to look at the ebb and flow of this conversation. The opening remark of girl A is not wholly self indulgent, for at the end she is prepared to admit her jealousy, and imply that this might have been part of the reason for the family splitting up, as she puts it. Girl E sympathetically adds a clarificatory remark, "You were out of things" which A takes up and develops again from her own view point. The contribution from Girl B, however, begins to move the discussion from the particular to a generalisation about the changing relationships between parents as a result of having children. She shows a sympathetic insight into their difficulty, thus trying to soften and perhaps explain the original* while providing a broader perspective from that of the particular and personal. "You see it takes so much of their time ... and it takes a certain place in their lives." Girl A sees the truth of this generalisation and supports it, again illustrating from her own personal experience, and this is further illustrated by Girl B. Girl D then contributes a very specific illustration from her own experience of how the family has begun to drift apart somewhat (as the children grow older perhaps) and the father is ignored. "My dad comes home and he sits down and

*comments from Girl A,

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says, Will somebody get my slippers? and nobody moves.....He feels very neglected I think". The girls then take up this idea and try sympathetically to understand the father's point of view, culminating in the observation by girl D, "He ~ the one that goes out to work....earns the money, as he says." At this moment girl B offers a different generalisation about the role of the father in family relationships and the way is open for a shift in the discussion and a new dimension to be considered. "But then again, you find some families who....don't take this attitude. They feel that .... both should be the sort of...head.. you know...leader."

This relatively unstructured talk is typical of much talk among friends. There is a willingness to listen to the other person, and a respect for that person as a person. Learning does seem to be going on, perhaps in an incidental, partly haphazard way than in a structured way, for what gets raised for consideration is what happens to come uppermost in the minds of the pupils. However, this kind of talk, I would argue, is an essential part of learning, especially as a preliminary to more structured talk, such as reporting back.

To ask pupils to report back the findings of their exploratory talk to the rest of the class is a different kind of talk, making different demands, for it requires ideas, opinions and attitudes to be crystallised and organised, and then made explicit in a manner not necessarily appropriate, or called for, in the small groups. And large class discussion with the teacher leading, is talk of another kind, making other demands. For example, when several ideas and opinions are floating at once, or the teacher frames questions which call for different, perhaps more rigorous appraisals of experience than those called for by/or the peers, pupils are made to pursue one facet of experience with tenacity and increasing complexity.

Learning through talk of different kinds then is important. I suppose it is self evident that pupils will only improve their competence in talk by being allowed to talk in their lessons. However, the mere fact that talk, whether in small or large groups, is going on will not necessarily ensure that learning and greater competence is being accomplished. The role of the teacher is crucial. The descent from the dais has made new and complex demands on him. No longer has he the security of a rigid structure, however spurious that structure was, for this kind of teaching demands flexibility, the ability to organise in a more fluid situation, the acceptance of individual differences, a clearer understanding of different functions of language, and so on. However, despite the descent from the dais, some of the teachers traditional roles are still important, not least the example he sets in his own uses of spoken language. As he talks with his pupils, whether in small or large groups, his own attitudes & uses of language will be one model which hopefully will implicity illustrate, on the one hand respect for others, and on the other flexible yet precise language control. But some of his work will have to await the moment and be more explicit,

for as he deals with responses he will need to call for respect and flexibility from his pupils. This might take the form of restoring tolerance among a group of intolerent pupils, or calling for rephrasing where vagueness or incoherence occurs, or putting a new viewpoint for consideration, or asking for discussion to be deepened, or just remaining silent, thus tacitly affirming the validity of his pupils' responses and language usage.

My argument so far has been implicitly suggesting that much of the way the teacher works for improvement in control and flexibility of talk arises best out of the on-going, day to day work. The setting of isolated "exercises" in talk are, in my opinion, not much help in bringing about greater control and deeper insight. It seems to me that talk must arise out of purposeful activities, and the teacher must be alert to the moment by moment needs of his pupils. This is not to say, however, that the teacher cannot "arrange" for different kinds of talk to arise naturally out of on-going work. I have tried to suggest that he can, and have illustrated, albeit somewhat crudely, three different kinds of talk. To teach well in this manner, however, the teacher must have some insight into language and the purposes for which we use it, and a pretty clear understanding of the way different language activities structure experience, and the demands these are making on his pupils' resources.

Improvised Drama

Closely related to talk in the classroom is the use of improvisation to explore experience, for this activity, on the whole, takes as its starting point the pupil's own experiences & language and moves out from this base. Unlike working with a text, where the pupil tries to relate to, and make sense of, another person's words, and thus the experiences represented by these words, working on improvisations demands that the pupil uses himself as the starting point, and pulls language out of himself appropriate to the experiences he is exploring. Crudely put, when working on an improvisation the pupil starts from inside himself and moves to the outside, but when exploring a text he starts from outside and moves inside.

Working on improvisations then is an important way of exploring experiences, and of getting pupils to find and use language appropriate to those experiences. These improvisations can be short and wholly concerned with the pupil's own experience, such as exploring fear or happiness, or they can be longer, more complex perhaps, and concerned with issues somewhat outside the pupil's immediate experience, such as an old person faced with giving up his home, or the conflict of loyalties in say a union strike. In the first kind of improvisation the pupil is, in some sense, recreating his own experience and using his own language, perhaps more sharply, in the recreation, but in the second kind of improvisation he is moving into experiences somewhat unknown to him, trying to explore new roles and find new language to express and come to terms with the experiences.

In addition to rehearsing different kinds of talk through improvisation, the pupil will be asked to plan, reflect upon, and evaluate those experiences by talking

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over. Thus improvised drama, handled by the teacher who has some understanding of how to make different language demands on his pupils, can help the pupil to explore different experiences and new roles, and increase his competence in talk of different kinds.

Kinds of Writing

The past two decades has seen a significant change in the U.K. in the kinds of writing pupils are asked to undertake. This has been variously called the creative writing, or free writing, or personal writing movement. An early influential book in this post-war movement was Dora Pym's Free Writing (6), but seeds of the movement can be found as early as 1907 in a book called The Writing of English by Philip Hartog. (7) The movement is concerned firstly, with pupils exploring their own feelings and experiences, and writing about them in a personal way. Thus their experiences are seen to have integrity and value, and their writing an attempt to evoke these experiences with fidelity and honesty. However, to ask pupils only to recollect their own experiences, valuable though this is, can be ultimately stultifying. So secondly, the creative writing movement asks pupils to explore the experiences of others, of people close to themselves, such as brothers and friends, or those more distant, such as shopkeepers or nurses. And thirdly, it asks pupils to explore totally imagined experiences, even fantasy experiences.

Thus creative writing is partly a means to self discovery and to discovery of others, and like talk and drama, one of its primary functions is to deepen awareness of self and of others. But perhaps its difference is that it is a more private, reflective, more considered activity whereby the pupil is encouraged to mull over, crystallise and bring into focus more clearly his own feelings and attitudes, his own thoughts and ideas. The shift from the writing of earlier decades has clearly been from imitation and correct models to exploration and creativity, and at its best this writing is a form of literature.

However, the current situation in the U.K. is not as clear cut as it might seem from what I have said. There is confusion about what constitutes really honest exploration, as this example taken from the Excitement of Writing (8) clearly illustrates.

" I walked along the beautiful country lane, when a brightly coloured caravan caught my eye. I walked on until I came upon an encampment of the loveliest caravans I ever saw. Blues, reds, yellows and greens of all shades and sizes were there to meet my eye. Among all this: merry gipsies walked women made pegs and baskets while the men worked to get money to buy things needed to keep a family. The children went with small, thin, shoes on their feet. These poor children suffered greatly. Pots and pans were scattered upon the hard, brown ground. All the people of this camp made pegs or flowers. They all wore things given to them. Children wandered through the familiar forests of caravans and wagons. The only live stock he has are hens, dogs, and horses.

The hens have beautiful feathers of oranges and browns. Looking at them I could see how plump they were. The gipsies seemed to look after these hens. The dogs were thin and shaggy compared to the hens, while the horses were dirty and unattended.

I went closer to the caravans and the smell of logs burning met my nose. I could also smell food cooking in the open air. Although all the adventure tempted me I don't think I would be able to stand all the suffering and hardships these people endured. Everything about the gipsy camp seemed enchanting. Especially the gaily painted caravans and the friendly gipsy folk. After an exciting time among the gipsies I ran back home with caravans drifting through my mind."

Despite the clearly admirable verbal control of this eleven year old, one notices that the language is clichéd and has been written perhaps with an approved teacher model in mind. "I walked along the beautiful country lane, when a brightly coloured caravan caught my idea... an encampment of the loveliest caravans I ever saw. Blues, reds, yellows and green of all shades and sizes... Among all this: merry gipsies walked." Once or twice we see snatches of felt experience breaking through, "I don't think I would be able to stand all the suffering and hardship these people endured", only to be contradicted (possibly with the approved teacher model in mind again) by "Everything about the gipsy camp seemed enchanting...."

One serious weakness of the creative writing movement is that teachers have not really tackled the questions of control with the same vigour and rigour as they have the questions of relevance and release from inhibiting writing tasks. Teachers are probably right to reject the kinds of exercises which say to the pupils "correct this incorrect sentence which I have made up for you to correct", believing these to have little or no carry over into the pupils writing of compositions. (Although some quite imaginative teachers still use this kind of exercise.) But what teachers in the U.K. do not seem to have done is to think through clearly enough alternative strategies. The result of this is that there is some rather haphazard teaching about control. Some teachers even go to extremes arguing that control is of no real consequence, but many do recognise that there are public standards and that Standard English has some virtues. The approach of some of these teachers is take as their starting point the pupils own writing and to teach greater control by discussing, either with individuals or the class as a whole, some of the errors and loss of control which arise out of this work. The problem here, however, is that it is difficult to ensure systematic reinforcement in the teaching, for one can never be certain what kinds of errors will arise week by week, nor can one be sure which errors need early consideration and which might safely be deferred. For example, should one deal with capital letters before say simple uses of commas or doesn't it matter? And which kinds of errors of syntax should one focus on early and which later? At present I see little evidence of imaginative rethinking in the U.K. on the teaching of control.

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The Conscious Study of Language

The conscious study of language has been a commonplace in the English classroom in the U.K. since the turn of the century. Much of it, however, was concerned either with formal grammar (parts of speech, parsing and clause analysis), or with exercises in identifying figures of speech, scanning lines of poetry, dictation, vocabulary lists, and so on.

Perhaps some of the best language work taught during the past thirty or forty years has been that associated with the study of literature. Here imaginative teachers have explored the techniques of writing as a complex relationship between an author's meaning, style and form and an individual's response to the work.

Today the emphasis is changing. One can still find teachers spending valuable time drilling formal grammar into pupils, despite the massive research evidence since the pioneering work in 1903 of the American, Rice,(9) that pupils are not helped in their own uses of language from learning it (and can even be hindered). And one can still find teachers aridly teaching poetry by concentrating on metaphor hunting or scansion, for example. But many teachers have abandoned these approaches and are turning to other, more profitable, language concerns. This is not to say that the best in the teaching of literature has been abandoned, although teachers are now more aware of the demands that an entirely analytic, literary critical approach puts on the intellectual and linguistic resources of their pupils.(10) What I am suggesting is that many teachers of English in the U.K. are acknowledging that powerful forms of language other than literature are impinging daily on their pupils, and that these should also be explored and understood.

Studying The Mass Media

The mass media as we see it today is a peculiarly 20th century phenomenon. The daily outpourings of radio and television, newspapers and comics are pervasive and influential in forming opinions at local, national and international levels in a manner not known before this century. Thus people need more than ever before to be aware of how language is being used to structure and organise experience, whether to influence, persuade, amuse, and so on. This is not to say ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ but rather to say that that the mass media are dragons to be exercised, / we all need to understand how

language used by others projects certain expectations on to any new experience. For these reasons teachers of English in the U.K., during the past decade, have taken the lead in introducing the study of the mass media into their classrooms.

In a short paper of this kind I can only briefly outline some of the approaches teachers are taking. With advertisements, for example, teachers are bringing examples of these into the classroom (from newspapers or taped from television) and asking questions to be considered such as the exactness or vagueness of the language used, the appeals made to emotions and values which have little or nothing to do with the product, the information the consumer has a right to expect, and so on. Pupils are also invited to write and record advertisements and to discuss their attempts, thus learning at first hand more about processes in talk and writing. Similarly with newspapers, these are brought into the classroom and questions are considered, such as the ideal contents of a newspaper, comparisons of the way different papers report the same item, the distinction between opinion and comment and factual reporting, appeals made by headlines, and so on. Once again pupils are invited to write reports themselves, say on a school event, or try their hand at writing headlines, to explore more closely some further processes in writing. Television, radio and comics are also explored in detail. (11)

The Language of Everyday Use

One of the most interesting recent developments in the conscious exploration of language in the U.K. English classroom has been concerned with the vast spectrum of language used in our everyday lives. The work of modern linguists (I shall say more about this later) has made teachers more aware of the wide variety of language uses; and the availability of the taperecorder has made it easier to bring examples of spoken language into the classroom. Thus examples of the language of gossip, interviews, children, politicians, different kinds of work, town signs, and so on can be explored. (12)

The question might be asked, what will pupils gain by spending time on this seemingly ephemeral language? The answer teachers might give is that these explorations help their pupils to understand more clearly different varieties of language

in everyday use, and how these vary according to the situation, the relationships between people and the subject matter. They might also say that perhaps it is the deepening of the pupils understanding of people and relationships which is even more important in these explorations. As one begins to look closely at the way people use language, and the kind of strategies they adopt, questions about relationships, individual attitudes, feelings and beliefs are inevitably raised, which can lead on to questions about motivations, "the sub-text" as Vygotsy calls it, (13) crucially important in the understanding of language usage.

Thus a study of living language can deepen insight into the human condition, and might be seen to be complementary to those explorations of human experience through the pupils own uses of language, which I have discussed earlier in this paper.

Some Models of Language Informing the Work of Teachers of English

There is too often among teachers a contempt for theory. One can understand why this has arisen. Some of it is bad, some of it abstruse. However, bad and abstruse theory should not make us contemptuous of theory, for some of it is good, or at least helpful, and can, if properly understood help us to understand more clearly some of our classroom practice. It can have very practical application. In this last section I want to discuss briefly some models of language which teachers in the U.K. are beginning to find useful.

Modern Linguistics

The work of modern linguists has begun to make teachers of English aware of new features of their language, and these are beginning to have important repercussions in the classroom. One is the realisation that English in not Latin, and that the grammar of English cannot be made to fit that of Latin. The work of Chomsky, of course, has been the major influence in getting us to look at the grammar of language in a different way. This is not to say that the study of transformational grammar should replace that of Latin based grammar,. I have suggested earlier in this paper that the study of grammar, an essentially analytical, categorising activity, does not seem to help in improving the pupils performance in using language, a synthesing, creative and specific activity. Nor is it to suggest that teachers of English should

import wholesale linguistic approaches into their classrooms. The siren voices need to be judiciously considered, and perhaps firmly resisted. What I am arguing is that modern linguistics can inform the teacher, and can help him to understand his own classroom practice, and perhaps modify it where appropriate.

To give a practical example of this, teachers might consider the linguists' notions of appropriateness. In the past, teachers have been concerned with correctness. Their attitude was that there was one correct English, written Standard English was the model, and anything which deviated from this was incorrect. This, of course, led to all kinds of ridiculous prescriptions and proscriptions. Slang was barred from written compositions, even when a person was speaking in character; prepositions were never to be put at the end of sentences; nice was never to be used, and so on. Teachers today are recognising that language has to be appropriate, and are trying to help their pupils to use language in this way. There is, in a sense, no one correct English, but many correct Englishes according to the context of the situation. Thus a letter to a friend would be written in an English somewhat different to a letter of application for a job; and a conversation between a mother and small child, and between the same mother and someone asking her questions for a survey, would have significant differences in lexis, grammar and phonology.

Relevant Models

Associated with the notion of appropriateness is the idea of demands that we make of language, and the nature of these demands. Halliday, in a recent article,(14) has suggested seven uses or models which the child has internalised, and which he uses to make sense of the world about him. These are the Instrumental Model, the "I want" function; the Regulatory Model, the "do as I tell you" function; the Interactional Model, the "me and him function"; the Personal Model, the "here I come" function; the Heuristic Model, the "tell me why" function; the Imaginative Model, the "let's pretend" function; and the Representational Model, the "I've got something to tell you" function.

Of course, none of these models is completely watertight, and any piece of discourse will usually reveal more than one of these models operating. However,

the model does seem to me to be useful in that it helps teachers understand more about functions of language, and may help them to discover in which areas some pupils have deficiencies, and equally important in which areas their own teaching is deficient.

Function Categories

I have mentioned earlier the work of James Britton. This has been concerned with exploring the functions of writing, and has begun to influence the thinking of teachers in the U.K. (15) Britton and his associates have examined a vast amount of writing from schools, not only in English but in other subjects, to discover the functions this writing seems to be serving. Their argument, crudely put, is that writing is a highly differentiated task, and we should understand more of the nature of these functions and the demands they place on the pupil.

Starting from a statement by Sapir "that ordinary speech is directly expressive," Britton suggests that a great deal of speech is in actual fact expressive. One of its main characteristics is that it is "language close to the speaker: What engages his attention is freely verbalised, and as he presents his view of things... so he also presents himself". Expressive speech is relatively unstructured, unrehearsed and "is free to follow the shifting focus of attention .... meets no demands but his (the speaker's) own, takes for granted a listener's readiness to be interested both in the speaker and his message." Expressive speech is speech such as gossip and the speech of young children and may be thought of as undifferentiated matrix out of which other speech comes. This other speech moves in two directions. One is towards the transactional, the other towards the poetic. Transactional language is language to get something done, where the speaker is in the role of participant in the affairs of the world. Thus language to persuade, inform, regulate, and theorise would be transactional. Poetic language is language where the speaker is freed from the "participant's need to act (to interact socially, to keep his end up, to turn events to his own advantage etc)" and where he is in the role of spectator to events "able to attend more fully to the evaluative processes." Thus composing a poem about a man attending to his sick child is language in the poetic, whereas actually getting up in the night and talking to one's own

sick child is language in the transactional. In the first situation one can stand back, admire the language and form of the poem, evaluative ones feelings, even stop composing if it distresses one too greatly. In the second situation one uses language to discover what is wrong, comfort the child and try to resolve the problem. Unless one is totally heartless, one cannot withdraw from the situation, nor can one easily reflect upon the human condition while the child is crying.

For Britton the expressive to poetic or transactional is to be found in writing as well as speech, and there are different sub-categories of the transactional based on an abstractive scale. The importance of this model is that is suggests firstly that expressive language is the matrix out of which other language comes, and secondly that writing is a very differentiated task making different demands on pupils.

The implications of this model for classroom practice are quite far reaching. For example, if the expressive is the matrix out of which the other functions come, then we need to tap expressive language (whether in spoken or written form) and not shut it out of the classroom. This is especially true of the English classroom, for the teacher is concerned to explore bedrock human emotions, and the way pupils feel about things. (I made reference to this when discussing the five girls talking about family relationships.) Equally important is the realisation that some kinds of writing, generalising, speculating and theorizing for example, are higher up the abstractive scale than say recording and reporting, and consequently make great demands on pupils. (16) Thus it may be wise to, ask pupils to use only expressive and low level abstraction in early writing, and move them later to the higher levels once confidence has been gained. However, we still know little about processes and have much to discover. (17)

Restricted And Elaborated Codes

The final model, I wish to discuss is that of Bernstein's restricted and elaborated code theory. Crudely put Bernstein posits two codes of language. One restricted which he identifies with the lower working class, the other elaborated which he identifies with the middle class. Again crudely put the restricted code is less flexible than the elaborated. The theory has, however, undergone considerable modification over the past ten years. In a recent paper(18), Bernstein suggests that the codes are socio-linguistic rather than linguistic and that, "Direct speech forms or codes symbolize the form of the social relationship, regulate the nature of the speech encounters, and create for the speakers different orders of

relevance and relation." Later in this paper he argues that "forms of socialisation orient the child towards speech codes which control access to relatively context - tied or relatively context- independent meanings. Thus I shall argue that elaborated codes orient their users towards universalistic meanings, whereas restricted codes, orient, sensitize, their users to particularistic meanings: that the linguistic realization of the two orders are different, and so are the social relationships which realise them."

If Bernstein is right, the implications are quite far reaching so far as formal education in school is concerned, for the school, Bernstein argues, tends to demand and use language which is elaborated and oriented toward universalistic meanings, which places the child from a lower working class background at a disadvantage, for his restricted code is oriented towards particularistic meanings. As he says later in the article, "one of the effects of the class system is to limit access to elaborated codes." While not ruling out the possibility of children from lower working class homes using elaborated codes, he suggests that the use of such (elaborated speech) varients will be infrequent in the socialization of the child in his family."

Berstein's theories have come under attack, both in England and in the USA,(19) but despite this, teachers of English have found them disturbing, and have been alerted to some possible reasons why some pupils find formal learning situations difficult.

Conclusions

This paper has, of necessity, had to be selective. I am aware that I have not considered reading, the language concerns associated with literature, and listening ability. Nor have I considered immigrant language problems, mainly concerning black immigrants such as Pakistani pupils who have no English, and West Indian pupils who use some forms of English somewhat different to U.K. English speaking pupils. This is not to say that these are unimportant. They are questions which are concerning teachers of English in the U.K., and which have their myths surrounding them. What I have tried to do is to explore some important language concerns in the teaching of English in the U.K. in the hope that our problems, myths and answers will be of help to you.

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